

Subject: KANAKO MOTOYO! gets all Toyota-esque with TOMOKO KUZUMI! LANCE STORM! looks all cool against DANNY COLLINS! in Germany. ULTIMATE WARRIOR looks great against ULF HERMAN! in super-fast-forward! Badd Blood has Blood and is real Badd.

ALOHA~!

The news about Brian Pillman's death is tragic and shocking. I feel like I have seen a man slowly and steadily self-destruct right in front of my eyes- if it turns out he did die of a drug overdose. What a waste and a shame.

WELCOME TO DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #52!

I just got back from Tim's- where Dave, Wayne, Steve, Keith, and the fella Tim never introduces me to just finishes the gut-wrenching viewing of Badd Blood and I had to watch this JWP tape to get the spectre of Vince ruining a GREAT match by sticking in the the shittiest angle of the year, out of my mind. If I were Micheals, I would just quit and go to Mexico and wrestle until my contract was up. He almost kills himself doing the craziest table bump ever seen, just to set up a shittiest of shitty run-ins by Isaac Yankem DDS's latest incarnation to expose the business, and totally disregard EVERYTHING this cage match was building to. I'd be suitably pissed. The rest of the card was not very good but not as bone-headedly shitty and infuriately stupid. When the flag match turned into a game of Buck-Buck, I was digging it the most. Wayne and I exchanged kick ass Fat Albert jokes. Anyway, here's the wrestling things.

!@!@!@!@! JWP TV [5/18/97 (taped 5/10 Tokyo); 6/20/97 (taped 6/8-6/15)]

JWP is just awesome. JWP is the most underrated promotion on the face of the earth. They have more cool wrestlers per capita than anyone. Their champion, Hikari Fukuoka is as good as any champion in any other promotion and smokes most others like a cheap cigar when you think about it. It isn't stagnant and in turmoil like AJW, it's roster is more developed than GAEA in that they have more great workers in their prime at the top, and JWP is just chock-filled with REALLY hot babes who can wrestle like mother fuckers.

Tomoko Kozumi vs Kanako Motoya for the JWP Jr Title is freaking GREAT. GAEA has lots more good youngsters than JWP but none of them are as polished as these two. Both are from the Manami Toyota mold with Kozumi being one leg up because she also seems to model her moves after the amazing Hikari Fukuoka. Motoya gets loads of offense in early, hitting fabulous amounts of Toyota-style springboard out-of-ring dropkicks and a fun-filled goofball sentonathon sequence right before Kazumi kicks in with the upper level powerbombs. Kazumi hits a cool variation of that corner top-turnbuckle roll-up that Psicosis would later try on Juventud Guerrera and almost kill him. OOOHH Yeah, Kazumi vs all the GAEA tiny gals is gonna be filling some seats for a long time starting in the very near future. Ditto for the copiously impressive Motoya. They are definately ALL THAT and a bag of chips, as the youth say these days.

Devil Masami/Hikari Fukuoka vs Cutie Suzuki/Plum Mariko for the JWP Tag Title is marred by the fact that the one taking the hellish bumps is now dead because of her extensive exposure to them. Since Plum Mariko didn't look she doing too well at this point in May, I can't believe that they didn't notice that was something was really wrong months later. I guess hindsight is 20/20, but it definately makes watching this match a real sad experience. Plum Mariko was so great at the times when she wasn't injured, and it is a shame and a tragedy to see her untimely end being moved up by high impact matches like these because nobody was aware of her condition while they were wrestling her.

Dynamite Kansai vs Candy Okutsu was pretty okay by the end but it starts off with a truly annoying amount of no-selling by usually adorable Dynamite Kansai. Candy never gets in anything too impressive past a suplex on the floor and a good plancha off the turnbuckle- as they did the little gal trying to affect the no-selling big gal- not my favorite kind of match- but these two are professionals so it should be good.. Kansai sells enough by the middle of the match to make me avoid the Shark Tsuchiya crackes, so when she puts the boots to the underratedly beautiful Candy Okutsu by the end, it isn't stomach-turning as it could have been.

Hikari Fukuoka vs Tomoko Kozumi for the JWP Title is a little sloppy in parts but, overall, it is deep in the realm of Coolness. Kozumi beats the crap out of Hikari for a long time, and gets some hot nearfalls after hitting some hot moves! HOT! Kazumi shoots her wad by hitting the fat-ass springboard planchas and dropkicks to the floor that soften up the beautiful Fukuoka enough to hit her with the lucha-inspired role-ups. Hikari finally reverses things as she kicks Kuzumi in the stomach as a highspot goes awry and goes into her power arsenal and hits some devastating suplexes to set her awe-inspiring Tiger Driver finisher. I guess the next phase is for Hikari to have to use the horrifyingly painful-looking Moonsault Stomp on her next. I'm sure Miss Kozumi is suitable stoked.:) Hey! Hey! Welcome to the bigtime.

Chigusa Nagayo/Devil Masami/Meiko Satomura/Tomoko Miyaguchi vs Mayumi Ozaki/Chikayo Nagashima/Sugar Sato/Reiko Amano in an Elimination Match was a peck of fun. Joe Petrow and Glenn Tsunekawa were in attendance that night and yet neither hipped me to the fact that you get to see the divine Mayumi Ozaki's sports bra by the end! WOO-HOO! BOTH HANDS ON THE KEYBOARD, PLEASE! This was fast-paced and I would have preferred more youngsters lasting longer, though everyone of the old ladies- with the obvious and annoying exception of less-than-endearing Devil Masami- sold for them like champs. Satomura and Sato were the best of the lil punkins- each hitting their usually cool spots (flying reverse elbow, toprope rolling cross-armbreaker, dragon screw) with Sugar doing the choice dropkick off the toprope to the leg of Devil- all before being eliminated WAAAY too early. Nagashima was kinda non-existant in this match as was the early-exited (yeah sure.:)) Miyaguchi. Chigusa and Oz at the end was REALLY choice as they kicked the holy hell outta of each other, kicked out of each other's finishers and were constantly being saved by eliminated punkins and grandmas that were erstwhile kicking each other's butts out on the floor. Chigusa hits the FATTEST ASS powerbomb that eclipses her earlier attempt at her Rolling Three. This was neato, definately.

Devil Masami/Jaguar Yokota vs Dynamite Kansai/Candy Okutsu is the surprisingly awesome match on this tape. Jaguar Yokota is becoming the Female Equivalent To El Gran Hamada in that in a span of absolutely NO TIME has gone from old codger who is definately over the hill to spry Senoir Citizen that wrestles as hard as any of the youngsters. She is definately feeling it in this one because she is being nifty all over the place in this match, being all wiley and resilient against the outclassed Kansai and making Candy look Goddess-like when she is in with her. The Octopus Hold part with Jaguar and Dynamite is priceless. It was really neat seeing Jaguar in with women who weren't so green or over-the-hill that she didn't have to dumb it down any-like she does a lot of times in Jd'. Devil Masami rounds out the match. GET ALL THIS!!! WHOMP ASS!

Catch Wrestling Association (I'm guessing)- Return of the Warrior (9/23/95 from Hannover, Germany)

Doug sent me this baby, along with a very cool UK mystery handheld of a KO Tourney that even Peter Ransom can't place.:) DIG IT!

Joe Joe Lee vs. Rod Price: With the return of Rod Price to the hot-bed of turmoil-that-one-would-usually-associate-with-a-CFL-franchise that is the USWA, I can honestly say have seen Price's roided out mug WAY too much this week- in that I watched a mountain of USWA that one of my main homies, Walter sent me and then I saw this baby. Joe Joe Lee is none other than New Japan future Saving Grace, Kojima. This is actually pretty neat because Kojima was doing a Muta move set back then and it works pretty well for him, though I prefer his spunky batch of power moves and top rope shenanigans that he has based his style on now. Price is proficient in his Steiner Lite batch of basic suplexes and body slams. The announcing is in German and we know how much fun that can be. FAR more curious than good, but you can't have everything, where would you put it, as they say.

Cannonball Grizzly vs. Dave Taylor: I did not know that Dave Taylor worked as a face over there and he had the very undignified parcel of tassels strewn about his outfit and he was clapping a lot to get the crowd into it, so you can imagine my chagrin when they add the incredibly non-working Cannonball Grizzly into the unsettling mix. Taylor can't do anything with the rotund Grizzly so he just kinda sells a lot Grizzly's crappy offense and tries to get to the finish and go to WCW and get a minor push or something. I need to get more of this CWA stuff, but with Taylor in with guys who can actually do something, one would think.

August Smisl vs. Big Titan: Speaking of guys who I'm seeing way too much of because of my USWA connection, welcome to the world of Big Titan.:) This match is a whole lot of punching by the current Rick Titan and former fake Razor Ramone- though he hits a decent plancha and highly okay Frankensteiner. Smisl didn't have enough of a chance to do much of anything but sell, so I can't tell if he is one of those Euro-Mat Master types or just some German guy who wrestles in Germany. YEP! Big Titan. YEP!

Lance Storm vs. Danny Collins: this was pretty cool once it kicked in. They start with a Kendo level stall through crowd call and response. It works to the ultra-nifty highspots well and Lance is dynamic as all get-out! Collins is good and pretty agile and sold Lances highflying all-around swellness well. Belfast Bruiser runs in and beats the shit out of Storm with a chain, which ya gotta love.

John Hawk aka Bradshaw vs. Ice Train: HEY!HEY! This was GREAT because they BOTH move REALLY fast when I put on the Super Fast Forward! YEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-HA~!

Dave Finlay/Drew McDonald vs. Tony St. Clair/Franz Schumann: I can't figure out what happened in this match. It's over in like TWO minutes. Drew MacDonald and St Clair do a little matwork, Drew takes an over the top rope bump, Finally tags in and pins St Clair and Schumann doesn't even enter the ring. Very puzzling.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Ulf Hermann: HOLD ON A MINUTE! Ulf Herman does the amazing feat of extracting a watchable match out of the totally unwatchable Mr Hellwig. Herman literally works circles around the amazingly blown-up-in-twenty-seconds UW and actually gets his Warriorness to bump for him. Hell, Ulman gets in a tope and a somersault senton off the apron on the baffled Ultimate one. Hellwig does the smart thing and just sells and does restholds and only exposes his hilariously unEuro-stiffness-level batch of K-rappy offense on two occasions. This match doesn't suck for REAL until the very end when UW goes into his finisher, so hell, I'm calling it a miracle and calling Ulf Herman the King of the CWA and calling this a match up there with the true enigmas of wrestling- falling well short of the Cactus Jack/Van Hammer miracle of miracles mind you- but I minor miracle none the less. There you have it.

CWA is basically like getting a WAR tape- you REALLY have no idea how to judge the quality of ANYTHING until you watch it. That's what I love about WAR and that's what I'm starting to really dig about the tiny amount CWA-related stuff I've seen.

TOMORROW! LUCHA LUCHA LUCHA ! USWA! ECW! WAR!

NANIWA~!

Dean Rasmussen, who loves it when Juventud spins around LaParka's shoulders real quick and then kicks him in the head.